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WORKS IN PROGRESS

Established in 1990, by the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition.

Wal-Mart's Trojan Horse?

by Trudy Springer

So you think Olympia has a moratorium against large retail stores? Think again. Oh, they passed a moratorium alright, stating that no retail space could exceed 125,000 square feet, but on Wednesday, May 18th the Olympia City Council granted an exemption from the moratorium to Westfield in a 5 to 1 vote.

This exemption states that Westfield cannot exceed 125,000 square feet *per floor.* The council has, by this ridiculous caving in to the demands of Westfield, effectively voided the moratorium.

Just who is Westfield? That's the question I asked myself while listening at a previous study session to one of Westfield's representatives respond to a council member's question with, "that would be getting into restraint of trade issues." Hmm, I thought, that sounded like a veiled threat to me; just who are these people?

Research quickly established that Westfield is to the mall industry, what Wal-Mart is to retail, in my humble opinion anyway.

We are all aware of the fact that Wal-Mart money flows back to Bentonville, Arkansas and in the case of Lowe's Home Centers, it flows back to North Carolina. Well, in the case of Westfield, it really travels - it flows to Sydney, Australia. That's correct: Westfield is an Australian company, owned by the second richest man in Australia, Mr. Frank Lowy, a close personal friend to the richest man in Australia, Rupert Murdoch.

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How big is Westfield? As of mid 2003 they own 67 malls in America, 9 in Great Britain, 2 in Ireland, 11 in New Zealand and 40 in Australia. The owner, Frank Lowy, is estimated to be worth 4.2 billion dollars and his empire consists of: Westfield Holdings, Westfield Trust for Australia and New Zealand and Westfield America Trust.

I also discovered that in Connecticut, Westfield owns a mall called The Post in Milford, a neighboring community of New Haven. When the city of New Haven revealed plans to build a mall called the Long Wharf mall, near Yale University in 1998, Westfield immediately filed lawsuits to stop them. They also set up bogus community groups that opposed the New Haven mall. After years of legal costs and counter lawsuits, Westfield prevailed. New Haven gave up and cancelled the mall plans. In Michigan, Westfield in association with Simon Property Group attempted a hostile take-over of the Taubman Center, Inc.; fortunately for Taubman their connections in the state legislature succeeded in passing legislation that strengthened a bill called the "Control Share Acquisitions Act", which stopped the hostile take-over efforts by Westfield. In Sydney, Westfield was successful in stopping a planned competitive mall at a place called Orange Grove Road, which raises questions to this day about who in government was bought off to help Westfield kill their competitor's efforts.

No wonder, I thought, Westfield raised the 'restraint of trade' issue; they're very experienced in that arena.

My fears about Westfield requesting an exemption to the moratorium was that they could very likely put one of these big box monsters in the Capital Mall as an 'anchor' store. Sure enough, research confirmed my fears - in Sacramento, California, the council members and community were concerned that Westfield would put a Wal-Mart in the mall there. Westfield, at first, would only state that they were in negotiations with a possible 'anchor' tenant, but when a reporter researched and found out that it was Wal-Mart, Westfield admitted that their goal was to put a Wal-Mart in many of their malls. They succeeded in San Diego and are still working on getting Wal-Mart as a tenant in the Sacramento mall. I dutifully passed this research on to the Olympia City Council; I also testified during public comment what Westfield's record was regarding putting Wal-Mart stores in their malls, and I gave copies of this research to the council as well.

▸ **Trojan Horse** *continued on page 11*

Letters from Baghdad

by Joe Carr

Joe Carr is a former Olympia resident. In 2003 he worked with the International Solidarity Movement in the Palestinian city of Rafah, where he witnessed the Israeli military killings of Olympia activist Rachel Corrie and British activist Tom Hurndall. He subsequently volunteered with the Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) in the southern West Bank. In early May, he joined CPT in Baghdad, as one of the few internationals based outside the US-fortified Green Zone. The following is an edited excerpt of his ongoing journal, which can be read in its entirety at www.lovinrevolution.org.

7 May 2005

Our neighborhood is incredibly diverse, a wonderful mixture of Shiite, Sunni, Kurds, and Christians; pretty much every major Iraqi ethnicity is represented. We live right on the Tigris River, so outside our door is a gorgeous park. Right across the river is the infamous Green Zone, which stretches five miles in all directions. We regularly see and hear explosions from mortars, car bomb attacks, and the US military's destruction of unexploded munitions.

CPT Iraq has historically behaved according to a variety of security levels. We decided to fully withdraw twice after Iraqi neighbors and partners said we put them in more danger, but we returned when the threat lessened and Iraqis invited us back. In the past we have been able to walk around everywhere and take random taxis, but right now we're only going out when absolutely necessary, always in pairs, and only with trusted drivers. We have a wardrobe of traditional Iraqi clothing with which we try to disguise ourselves, but it's hard for Tom, who's a 6'3" broad shouldered bald white guy. He goes around in a grey beret and a black and white kaffiya; our Iraqi friends say, "there's no way we can make you look Iraqi, so we're going for Russian Palestinian".

Though the violence can be totally random, we should be fine as long as we keep our faces off TV and avoid the Green Zone, checkpoints, and military & police convoys. I promise that we're being careful and will withdraw if a specific threat against us arises or if our presence begins significantly endangering the Iraqis around us. I once again thank you for all your thoughts and prayers for me, the team, and the Iraqi people.

8 May 2004

[...] After dinner, one of our young translators stopped by. "What's up, man," he said in the most natural English slang I've heard from an Iraqi. I was convinced he'd lived in the states, but to my surprise he's spent his whole life in Iraq. He's a Palestinian Iraqi who learned English in school and took in plenty of American movies and music as a kid. When the US invaded Baghdad, they swept through his neighborhood while he was hanging out with his friends. One of the soldiers heard him speaking English and hooked him up with a job as personal translator for a Lieutenant. After awhile, they said they needed to do a security check on him or he'd be fired. Because he's a Palestinian refugee, he has no citizenship or paperwork, so the US military kicked him out. A few weeks later, US soldiers repaid his service to them by arresting him as a security threat. They imprisoned him in Camp Bucca for 11 months and released him only recently. He said the soldiers took a liking to him, and by hanging out with them he picked up his nearly perfect colloquial American English. I'm continually impressed with his use of words like "friggin," "yo," and "dope".

Black smoke from a car bomb on Sadone Street in Baghdad.

PHOTO BY JOE CARR

He's been through a lot for a 23-year-old. When he took me out to help me buy some Iraqi-style clothes, I told him I was a little frightened to be out on the street. He asked me if I'd ever been shot at, and I told him I had. He told me a story of when fighting broke out in his neighborhood and he had to hide in alleyways. People were shot and killed on both sides of him; it was one of several times that he had narrowly escaped death, al-hamdulillah ("thank God"). I suddenly felt a little silly for being frightened. He walked me back home quickly and without incident, as we chatted about partying and girls, and I felt totally at home.

10 May 2005

My First Car Bomb

At about 9:45am, we heard a loud explosion that shook our windows and echoed through our halls. We immediately looked at the clock to see if it was on the hour, as that is when US troops destroy unexploded ordinances. Since it wasn't, we immediately knew it must be a car bomb. Shelia had gone out 20 minutes before to run an errand, and she immediately called to let us know that she was inside and okay. Emergency vehicles

▸ **Letters from Baghdad** *continued pg 4*

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Works In Progress is a free, volunteer operated progressive community newspaper based in Olympia, WA. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the ***Works In Progress*** and are solely those of the authors.

Submissions:

Please send text as Word attachments. Artwork and photos can be sent electronically or we can scan them for you as camera-ready/black & white.

WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number.

Articles may be reprinted. Please cite source.

*If you don't see your issue being covered in **Works In Progress**, it's because you aren't writing about it! (Or aren't finding someone else to cover it!)*

Send submissions to wip@zhonka.net or mail to ***Works In Progress***, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295.

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We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society, and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

Back Issues:

Get your catalog of indexed ***WIP***'s below. Some back issues are available in the Timberland Library system. ***WIP*** is being archived on microfilm by the UW Library.

Cover: See ***Wal-Mart's Trojan Horse?***—page 1

WIP Schedule

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Announcements

Olympia Workers Get Organized

The Olympia Workers Association's mission is to assist working people in Olympia who want to improve their working conditions. Workers in all different types of employment deal with the same issues—job insecurity, health, safety, and childcare issues, bad pay, and the general lack of respect for wage workers. The Olympia Workers Association believes all people deserve workplace dignity, a living wage, safe working conditions and workplace democracy.

Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition June Events

DSHS Report Card 2005

Every year, WROC asks parents who receive public benefits to evaluate their experiences so that we can provide much needed feedback to caseworkers and administrators at DSHS. If you haven't filled out a report card this year and would like to have your voice heard, call the WROC office: 360-352-9716 or toll free at 866-343-9716.

Report Card Release! Wednesday, June 22nd
Please join us to present the grades to DSHS. We will hold press conferences in Olympia and in Seattle. Help us prepare the report card release at

WROC Night Out Monday, June 6th 6-8 pm
Join us at 5:30 for a potluck meal. Onsite childcare provided.
First United Methodist Church, 1224 Legion Way SE.

WROC Volunteer Meeting Wednesdays at 1:30 at the WROC Office
701 Franklin Street SE in the First Christian Church

Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition,
701 Franklin Street SE, Olympia, WA 98501, 360-352-9716

Meet the Nasrallahs

Nasrallah Family to visit Olympia

Members of the family whose home Rachel Corrie died defending will visit Olympia in June. Khaled, Samah and Sama Nasrallah will be at St. John's Episcopal Church, 114 20th Ave SE, Olympia, **June 18, 2005, 7:00 p.m**., Admission is by donation

Event co-sponsors are the Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace & Justice, the Olympia Friends Meeting, Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Olympia-Rafah Sister City Project, Veterans for Peace—Rachel Corrie Chapter, and St John's Episcopal Church.

Bringing it Home

Local Organizing Against the War

Downtown gathering **Saturday July 9, 3-9pm**. The purpose of the gathering on July 9, is to develop a strategy for resisting the war through concrete, local efforts. There will be food and singing and serious planning. We are inspired by nonviolent resistance movements around the world, and we are also excited about our collective possibilities. "Bringing it Home: Local Organizing Against the War" is co-sponsored by Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace, and the Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation.

If you will share your ideas and energy with us on July 9 for practical action to stop the war, or are interested in helping to organize the day, please contact one of the coordinators: Tom Crawford (280-0242; tcpraxis@comcast.net) or Emily Lardner (705-3678; hungrytigerofoz@hotmail.com).

Help Wanted

Join the WIP worker collective

Works In Progress is now at another crossroads. Once again, we must rally the community to bring more energy into this important grassroots media project.

The following is a list (in order of urgency) of work categories that currently need your help.

- Fundraising/ event planning
- Distribution
- Website update and management
- Editing/ proofreading

For more information, contact us at

wip@zhonka.net or **956-1136**

June 2005

Human genes in your rice bowl

Japanese scientists are splicing human genes into rice that will ultimately be grown for human consumption. While some opponents say the concept borders on cannibalism, genetic engineers claim the new rice has environmental benefits. Researchers spliced a gene from a human liver into rice to help the plant "digest" pesticides, thereby allowing the crop to be sprayed with up to 13 different pesticides without damaging the rice. The developers of the new human-rice admit that if this gene were to escape into the wild, a new generation of 'superweeds' could be inadvertently created. No testing of the product's impact on human health has yet been conducted. **Organic Consumers Association (OCA)**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Stanford University has okayed proposal to create mice with brains made almost completely of human brain cells. It was endorsed based on the assumption that the animal would probably not experience higher levels of human thought, given the size and shape...			**1** **2004**: Idaho jury begins deliberation of Saudi Arabian grad student accused of using internet to rally support for terrorism	**2** **1996**: Supreme Court upholds military death penalty, rejects claim sentencing procedures from Reagan era unconstitutional	**3** **1999**: Archbishop forbids St Michael to allow gay discussion grp on church property **2004**: George Tenet resigns as CIA chief	**4** **2003**: 9th Circuit Court of Appeals rejects Skokomish claim that Tacoma's 2 dams on Skokomish River interfere w/ fishing rights
5 **2001**: Pentagon fraud agency found making fake documents **2003**: Pres Bush in Qatar tells US troops the war was justified	**6** **2002**: Former CIA Director Robert Gates new pres of TX A&M **2003**: Pres. Bush states, "I am the master of low expectations"	**7** **2004**: Justice Dept memo obtained by WA Post says White House torturing al-Qaida members "may be justified"	**8** **2004**: LA Times reports after capture of John Walker Lindh Rumsfeld told military intelligence officers to "take the gloves off"	**9** **2004**: Stockholm Int'l Peace Research Institute reports world military spending surged during 2003 ($956 billion) nearly half by US	**10** **2004**: Saudi national grad student is acquitted of terrorist charges **2004**: FBI warns Olympia ELF planning a day of action	**11** **2004**: Hawkins to leave city council **2004**: WA Post reports military officer in Iraq used Guantanamo interrogation tactics
12 **2004**: Gunmen assassinate Iraq's deputy foreign minister **2004**: Nude cyclists ride thru Olympia; ELF was not involved	**13** **2002**: Dirty bomb suspect Padilla to be held indefinitely; no trial **2003**: Rachel Corrie's folks accept her honorary degree from TESC	**14** **2004**: Israel expropriates 1000s of acres of Palestinian farmland deep in West Bank for controversial segment of its separation barrier	**15** **2004**: Nation's 10 top climate researchers warn policy makers must act soon to address dangers associated w/ global warming	**16** **2004**: Seattle P-I reports gaming industry from British Columbia to Nevada donated almost $300,000 to Tim Eyman's I-892	**17** **2004**: 9-11 Commission investigators say Federal Aviation Administration/ NAADC bungled response at nearly every level	**18** **2003**: Rumsfeld dismisses Iraqi resistance **2003**: US bars US lawyers from representing war crimes suspects at UN tribunal
19 **2003**: Whistle signals the final shift at the Miller Brewery **2003**: WA Supreme Court upholds ban on animal trapping	**20** **2004**: Spokesman-Review reports documents show BC smelter dumped tons of mercury into the Columbia River since the 1940s	**21** **2004**: Supreme Court rules patients can't use state laws to sue HMOs for medical negligence; also one can be arrested for w/holding name	**22** **2004**: Fed judge okays sexual-discrimination class action lawsuit against Wal-Mart by 1.6 million making it largest civil suit ever	**23** **2004**: Explosion of air compressor ignites blaze at the Simpson Timber sawmill in Shelton; five employees are injured	**24** **2004**: Cheney on the Senate floor tells Sen Patrick Leahy to "go ?*@ yourself" **2004**: 97 Iraqi civilians/3 US troops killed	**25** **2004**: 'Fahrenheit 9/11' debuts in Olympia **2004**: Cheney defends his obscene remark, saying "it was long over due"
26 **2003**: UN announces it found no evidence linking Iraq to al-Qaida **2003**: US special operations soldier killed, 8 wounded	**27** **2004**: British lawmakers/aid activists say billions belonging to Iraq not accounted for by Iraqi Coalition Provisional Authority	**28** **2004**: 100s rioted outside Istanbul meeting of NATO **2004**: Fed negotiator to enter negotiations of WA grocers/ workers	**29** **2004**: Supreme Court rules free speech remains rule on Internet **2004**: Fahrenheit 9/11 is keeping 1-800 # of Rep Porter Goss busy	**30** **2004**: AARP reports drug makers tripled prescription drug prices just prior to Medicare's pharmacy discount card program	***...of the mouse brain. Close monitoring of the mice's behavior was recommended and the immediate killing of any that displayed "human-like behavior." —OCA***	

▸ **Letters from Baghdad** *from page 1*

rushed passed our apartment as we headed to the roof to look for smoke. A huge black cloud billowed from among the buildings 3/4 mile north of us.

Our landlord's wife was on the roof doing laundry. Before she ran down to call and see if her husband was ok, she told us that it looked like Firas Square, one of the major intersections at a bridge going across the Tigris into the Green Zone. We were planning to go through that intersection and over that bridge to the Green Zone today to meet with a UN human rights worker, and we worried we wouldn't be able to.

We decided to try the visit anyway, so we met our driver down the street and set off. We began talking about the explosion and noted that it wasn't in the Green Zone, "No," our driver said, "the black zone", and we laughed. We quickly learned that we wouldn't be able to take the normal roads to the bridge. Iraqi police blocked intersections with random items; metal pipes, tree trunks, random bits of razor wire, anything that would deter traffic away from the bomb site.

Turns out the car bomb wasn't at Firas Square but on Sadone street, they'd targeted a military convoy. We heard that seven were confirmed dead (the number always rises with time), all civilian bystanders, no military personnel. They say over 40 were injured, and the bomb entirely missed the convoy and only hit civilians. There was another bomb today we didn't hear, apparently a suicide bomber rammed his car into an Iraqi police station and injured six cops. There are always more attacks when the Iraqi National Assembly is meeting.

[…] Military convoys make their passing quite the event. They usually include multiple hummers with machine gunners on top, followed by SUVs and then more hummers. Iraqi traffic keeps a huge distance behind; apparently these convoys have shot-up many random Iraqi cars that accidentally drove too close. All the hummers have white signs with Arabic writing on them; we guess that they say something like "Stay back or we'll kill you!", but it's a paragraph of tiny letters that you have to get pretty close in order to read. Irony has become an art in occupied Iraq.

Armored helicopters frequently fly very low overhead. They fly low so that they're only in view for a short time and are harder to shoot down, but then of course they often have accidents and run into things. We had some discussion about how difficult it must be for a pilot to choose whether to risk being shot down or risk running into something. We concluded that it's best for them to not fly at all, and instead to go home and play with their children.

We found that the bridge was closed to traffic, perhaps because the National Assembly was meeting. Get this, every time the Iraqi National Assembly meets, they shut down the major bridge connecting north and south Baghdad. Can you imagine the US shutting down major highways every time Congress is in session? And we wonder why this new government is so unpopular. We began walking across the bridge as Iraqis are forced to, and quickly learned that it isn't closed to all traffic; military, contractors, and Iraqi National Guard (ING) vehicles whiz by, often at dangerously high speeds, despite all the walkers. The bridge is about a half a mile long, and lined with Iraqi women begging for money, men selling cold soda, and children offering to shine shoes.

The Green Zone

This massive fortified compound had been built-up in my mind as a wicked place of death and destruction. I've been terrified to go anywhere near it, like I'd spontaneously explode if we drove by or something. Therefore, I'd been fearing this visit with the UN, but I decided it was worth the risk to see this "Green Zone" and meet some of our key international contacts. Once we got there and inside, I realized that this was another exaggeration in my head. The guards and fortresses become scarily normal.

To get to the UN office, we had to go through 6 checkpoints and deal with five different security forces. We were initially greeted by ING and US contractors, then US contractors and US soldiers, then Georgian soldiers outside the UN compound, and finally UN Forces (called blue birds) who were soldiers from Fiji. I can't imagine being trapped in that place like so many journalists and NGO reps, forbidden to leave by their bosses who are working in offices thousands of miles away.

We met with the guy in charge of the entire UN human rights mission in Iraq. In fact, he's it. He's the *only* representative from the UN Human Rights Commission, and one of only 100 UN workers in the entire country, which includes the Fijian security forces. The number of UN staff only recently increased to 100 from 35. This is all the workers the UN is allowed to have to staff all their projects for the entire country, including administration, construction, humanitarian aid, governance, constitution-writing, refugees, children, and lastly, human rights; and none may leave the Green Zone.

This man is one of the most passionate and dedicated UN workers I've ever met. He obviously overworks himself, even though Green Zone curfew closes down his office at 9pm. He is frustrated that he's forbidden to leave, even with an armed convoy. He said he longed to live like us, or to even just go for a walk down the streets of Iraq. He's even contemplated using his vacation time to see the country he works so hard for. Besides, how is he supposed to monitor human rights in Iraq if he can't ever meet, visit, or interview Iraqis? The answer is obvious: he isn't. I believe the US has intentionally let the security situation get this bad so that they can occupy Iraq free from international monitoring. This is why our continued presence is so important.

We discussed ways that we could work with him; he said he could give us some contacts and we could provide him with information and interviews from abused detainees and other human rights abuses. One thing he can do is apply pressure from within and keep the US forces and new Iraqi Government on their toes, so we'll keep the reports coming. On the way out, he commented to a co-worker that CPT is his most important ally in monitoring human rights in Iraq. That's pretty flattering.

I believe the US has intentionally let the security situation get this bad so that they can occupy Iraq free from international monitoring. This is why our continued presence is so important.

12 May 2005

Today was a long and slow day. Multiple previously scheduled meetings were cancelled so we were stuck in the flat. There was no electricity at all, so once we ran the computer batteries and the car battery dead I was left with little work to do. Not to mention it was incredibly hot with no fans or AC.

The most interesting thing going on were the passing US military patrols. Three humvees and two battalions of US foot soldiers went street to street doing "house checks". Tom observed a group of them going into the orphanage to play with the children, thankfully leaving their guns outside. Otherwise, most Iraqis stayed inside and prayed they wouldn't be detained, or that the resistance wouldn't attack the patrol while on their street. A group of children trailed behind the convoy, likely fascinated by the American soldiers. The soldiers did nothing to discourage these curious children, even though the soldiers knew that the children would likely be killed or injured if the patrol was attacked. Perhaps the soldiers think the children act as some kind of human shield from the resistance; perhaps they think the active smiling kids somehow validate the soldier's presence; perhaps they just don't care whether the children are there or not. I would have asked them, but if we're seen talking to soldiers, Iraqis may think we're somehow associated with the military.

Tonight is Thursday night, the equivalent of our Friday night since Iraqis get Friday off. I invited my Palestinian-Iraqi homie to come over and party. This is the aforementioned young man with perfect American English who spent a year detained by the US. I'll call him Shaggy, because he reminds me of the beatnik character from *Scooby Doo*. The team agreed that he could crash at the CPT flat tonight because occupation forces shoot anyone out after the 11pm curfew.

Shaggy and I picked up some beers and hung out on the roof smoking the hookah. It was a nice night with a breeze and bright stars. We had an excellent view of the Tigris River, and right across into the Green Zone. As we smoked and drank, Shaggy got contemplative. He wondered aloud what all the internationals in there were doing and thinking. "Probably missing their families," he thought, "wanting to get out of here and go home". When he was detained in Camp Bucca, he noticed that the US soldiers were as much captives as he was. He wrote a poem called "Going Home," which affected the guards as much as it did the detainees. I'm continually amazed by the humanity of oppressed people. It is an enormous source of inspiration and hope.

Shaggy was quite popular among the soldiers at Camp Bucca. His jovial personality and fabulous American slang went over well, particularly with the black and Latino soldiers, he said. He even claims to have dated three soldiers: one black woman and two Latinas. He said that his popularity with the battalion protected him from the jealousy of other male soldiers.

Shaggy worked as a translator at the camp's medical facility. He'd sometimes be in there alone and would play on the radio. He'd pick it up and call another station and holler, "What the fuck is up over there?"

And they'd say, "Shaggy, what the hell are you doing? You know you aren't supposed to be on the radio!"

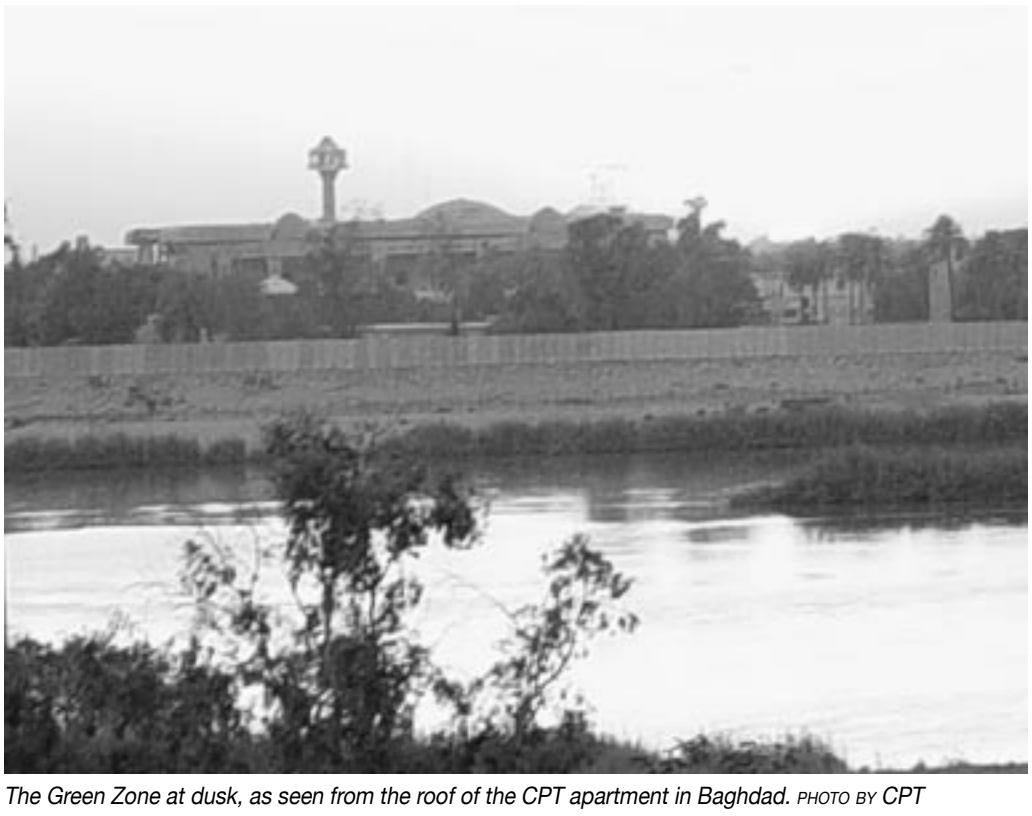
"I don't give a shit, tell me what the fuck is up."

"Shaggy, get off the fucking radio! What if someone hears?"

"Everybody knows me, so tell me what the fuck is up, or I'm gonna kick your ass." The soldiers would laugh, and they'd eventually tell him what the fuck was up.

We kept chatting about school and music and girls. When I asked him about his love life, he got quiet and introspective. "I was in love," he said, "but now she is gone". He said he fell in love with an Iraqi Christian girl that he met in school. They'd had a secret relationship and planned to get married, but it wasn't to be. During the first part of the US invasion, her house was hit by a US missile, one of the many that US troops fired into civilian neighborhoods. It killed everyone inside. "My love is dead" he said, and a tear rolled down my cheek.

These stories are always tragic, but it's particularly heartbreaking to hear a young man's saga of lost love. It's even harder for him because he can't talk about it to anyone. The secret relationship would shame both of their families. Credible reports show that the US invasion claimed the lives of over 100,000 Iraqi civilians. Shaggy's tragic story helps me remember that these victims are so much more than numbers.



The Green Zone at dusk, as seen from the roof of the CPT apartment in Baghdad. PHOTO BY CPT

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Before you forget…

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See page 2

Letters

Eli Sterling Controversy

We Must Not Let Our Loyalties Pre-determine Our Conclusions

Controversies and conflicts are important tests of principle. Nowhere is this more apparent than the polarization and scandal swirling around Eli Sterling, "founding father" of Olympia's Procession of the Species. As the City of Olympia announces that it may pursue criminal charges against Eli for procuring city funds under false pretenses, we are just beginning to find out details of this complicated, and ethically challenging, story.

Eli is liked and supported by many because of his role as "leader" for this funky and cool community arts event. While we may well be thankful to Eli for his leadership, the Procession is now supposed to be a *community* event and not the property of any one person. This means that monkey-business with the finances is a real disservice to all of us who value this special event.

It is natural that people should associate the goodness of the Procession with Eli, and therefore have a positive feeling toward him personally. It is also natural, and almost inevitable, that some people show more leadership than others in community projects. Still, it would appear that most people who involve themselves with the Procession support post-Patriarchal values, consensus-based decision making process, and the importance of critical and independent thinking about the institutions that shape our lives. If we really want to practice these values, we can not let our loyalties to groups, leaders, or friends pre-determine our conclusions. Instead, we must break free from the limitations of "group-think" and "group-loyalty", and act according to our highest principles, principles which can include group solidarity, but must go beyond it also.

We really need to have much more information before we can begin to have informed opinions about what went wrong, and how we, as a community, want to respond. At a minimum, we need to know why the funds were secured in a less than fully honest manner, whether Eli operated with some sort of meaningful oversight, how these funds were actually spent, and what the Procession's commitment is now toward accountability to the community as a whole.

We need to think about, and apply, our principles—and we definitely need more information in order to do so.

—Max Brown

*Portraying the Firebird, Eli Sterling speaks of the journey of the Wind, Firebird and Moon as Solstice Dancers circle him while performing the Dances of the Elements during a Winter Solstice Celebration at The Capitol Theater. Printed with permission, Steve Bloom/*The Olympian

Open Letter to the

Olympia City Council

I am writing to the council on behalf of the Olympia Community Association, a group of progressively minded citizens who have been meeting on a regular basis to better coordinate our work to make Olympia a livable city that supports and nurtures economic, social and environmental justice for all its citizens.

Many of us attended the town hall meeting held January 4th, 2005. The event was designed to solicit citizen input for priority setting in the coming year. We also read with interest the tabulated results of the community conversation, as well as the council's conclusions as reflected in the minutes from the council's planning retreat. While we laud the council for asking for community input, we question whether the council's chosen priorities truly reflect the community's desires.

According to the *Olympian*, the council's priorities for 2005 include "transforming downtown into a place where more people will live, work and play" and that the council intends to achieve this goal by "removing barriers—both real and perceived—such as inadequate parking and public safety concerns." The article goes on to say that the council "will work with merchants on a downtown ambassador program, in which citizens provide a police presence downtown."

While we agree that the community was united in wanting to make downtown even more attractive than it already is; we question how these specific goals and methods identified by the council reflect the citizen input garnered in the community conversation. In reviewing the notes from the event we found that parking was only mentioned 3 times in two of the seven focus groups and that a downtown ambassador program was not recorded in any of the seven groups as a priority. The issue of homelessness, however, was identified 63 times in all seven groups with an emphasis on the provision of shelter and the need for a day-use drop in center. Moreover, downtown restrooms were mentioned 14 times in 5 of the seven groups and the development of a shower/hygiene Center was mentioned 7 times in three of the seven groups.

Clearly the community has spoken. Homelessness and access to basic services is the primary concern as voiced by a majority of our citizens. Moreover, the community did not talk about homelessness in the context of public safety; but rather in the context of public values. We do not want to live in a community that fails to provide a safety net for the poorest amongst us. There needs to be adequate shelter and services to protect those that have fallen on hard times. We in Olympia care; and we ask that our elected officials listen and act to care for those who cannot care for themselves.

Nor is this solely an altruistic goal. Since the closure of the Bread & Roses drop-in center we have seen a steady increase in tension as the homeless are forced to live in the streets each day. It has brought undue pressure on the library, our parks and the sidewalks of our city. By providing a day shelter and bathrooms we would take the pressure off of the private and public facilities that are currently providing these services.

In our estimation, the provision of a day shelter should be the city of Olympia's top priority for 2005. We believe that a careful review of the documentary evidence from the community conversation supports this finding. We encourage the council to act on this citizen mandate.

Olympia Community Association
P.O. Box 1294 • Olympia, WA 98507

For more information about the Olympia Community Association and it's membership please contact Vince Brown at (360) 352-9647.

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Social Security Under Attack

Bush Has Grasped the Third Rail, Now Turn on the Juice

By Dave Lindorff

The cat's finally out of the bag.

Having failed to attract much interest in his plan for privatizing Social Security and killing it off more or less directly, President Bush, in a rare, but typically scripted press conference at the White House last week, declared his intention to convert the 70-year-old retirement security program into a welfare program, pure and simple.

Bush's latest scheme would see retirement checks slashed for those earning as little as $36,000 a year (by 13 percent according to one estimate).

Worse yet—and this is clearly the whole idea—once the program is turned into a welfare scheme, in which the middle and upper middle classes have no real stake, political support for the program will dry up, benefits for the poor will be slashed, and the program will eventually die or be killed off.

This is a defining moment for Democrats and for progressives.

Compromise at this point with Bush and with the Republicans in Congress would mean the beginning of the end for Social Security.

Congressional Democrats, who for years have warned that Republicans are out to ruin Social Security, now have it direct from the president's own mouth. If they cannot stand firm against the threat now that it's been clearly stated, they deserve to go the way of the Whigs.

As for progressives both inside and outside the Democratic Party, this is a moment to push hard for preservation of the most enduring legacy of the New Deal, a program which is probably more popular across class and region than any other.

The truth is, progressives have been handed a golden opportunity. Bush's espousal of an income-staggered retirement system opens the door for them to promote a genuinely progressive alternative—one which would not threaten the middle class or undermine broad political support for the basic program. That alternative is to call for an end to the cap on income subject to Social Security taxation (currently any income above $90,000 per individual is not taxed).

All too many Democrats have already surrendered the high ground in this battle by accepting as a given the Bush claim that the Social Security system is headed towards bankruptcy by 2041.

This claim is absurd (the fund cannot go bankrupt as it is backed by the U.S. government) and false (the "bankruptcy" is based upon an assumption that the U.S. economy will only grow by 1.9 percent per year over the next two and a half decades, a ridiculously low growth rate).

Some conservative and cowardly Democrats have also expressed a willingness to consider reducing the inflation adjustment in Social Security checks—a kind of slow-moving cut back of Social Security which, by the time it is recognized, will no longer have the fingerprints of the knife-wielders on it.

The only correct stand at this point is no compromise. Social Security must be not just preserved; it must be bolstered.

The president has grasped that third rail. It's time to throw the switch and hit him with some high-voltage popular outrage.

Dave Lindorff is the author of Killing Time: an Investigation into the Death Row Case of Mumia Abu-Jamal. *His new book of* CounterPunch *columns titled* This Can't be Happening! *is published by Common Courage Press. Information about both books and other work by Lindorff can be found at www.thiscantbehappening.net. He can be reached at: dlindorff@yahoo.com*

Olympia Police Accountability System Under Review by City Council

Drew Hendricks

Special to the *Works in Progress*

The Olympia City Council's General Government Committee met on Monday, May 16th to review the city's police accountability system and consider changes to its structure and goals. No decisions were taken at the meeting, which began at 11:30 AM on a Monday. The next scheduled General Government Committee meeting is set for June 6th, 2005 at 11:30 AM, again on a Monday. The agenda for that meeting had not yet been posted to the City's web site as of press time.

That web site address is: http://www.ci.olympia.wa.us/council/minutes/default.asp

The minutes of the meeting had not been posted as of press time, but Olympia Communications Manager Cathy Butler did forward a bullet list of actions requested of city staff. (Editor's note: outline format was renumbered by Drew, for clarity's sake.)

1) **Process Flow Chart**—update to reflect system changes; who does what; legal restrictions
2) **Research** Eugene, Portland, Seattle regarding accountability systems
3) **Develop proposals** for an Ombudsman and/or Expanded Auditor and/or Investigator
   - **a)** making sure info is available & people have system access to
   - **b)** a non-legal adviser/advocate who helps the complainant throughout the process to
   - **c)** an auditor/investigator who can compel additional investigation
     - *(Goals: independence, transparency, thoroughness).*
     - *Provide analysis of legal implications, relationship to City's current system, cost, etc.*
     - *Provide the analysis and/or proposals in some sort of visual format for ease of comparison.*
4) **Provide a proposal** for dispute resolution/mediation (possibly with Dispute Resolution Center) for service complaints.
5) **Provide a written explanation** of how the system insures that the service complaints reviewed by the Auditor were randomly selected.
6) **Develop proposals** for citizen involvement:
   - **a)** An advisory committee to the chief (Curt's proposal)
   - **b)** An advisory committee or board appointed by the Council that serves as "Stewards of the Comp Plan" (TJ's proposal)
   - **c)** An Empowered Citizen Review Board (Vince Brown's proposal)
   - **d)** Citizen engagement regarding laws, such as blue laws, and the community norms/expectations for police in Olympia (Pat Tassoni's proposal)
   - **e)** The status quo
7) In the analysis, **answer the question** "What are we solving by creating anything?"

Background from the Staff's Agenda for the May 16th Meeting (edited for clarity and grammar, and updated by Drew):

On February 24, 2004, the Olympia City Council appointed an Ad Hoc Committee on Police Accountability consisting of Council members Jeanette Hawkins, TJ Johnson, and Curt Pavola.

The committee's charge was to meet with citizens who had expressed concerns during the Public Communication portion of that evening's meeting. Those people had concerns about the City's police accountability system and the outcome of the Police Department internal investigation into a March 20, 2003 incident at the State Capitol Campus.

The Committee delivered its report, including recommendations, to the City Council and the community on November 1, 2004. One of the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee was to "Refer the Ad Hoc Committee's report to the City Council's General Government Committee to develop short-term and long-term solutions." At the March 14, 2005 General Government Committee meeting, eight criteria of an effective police accountability system were identified. The Committee asked staff to add some definition to the criteria for the Committee use in discussing the desired outcomes of a police accountability system. The Committee also asked that the group of "concerned citizens" to present a written proposal to the Committee based on the criteria list. That document was completed on March 22, 2005 and presented to the Committee at the May 16th meeting. It reads, in part: "We recommend the City Council create an independent entity, a Citizens Review Board, to investigate complaints that point to problems with police policy and procedure." The document also recommended that less serious complaints be handled through dispute resolution in a less formal process, featuring direct face to face communication with the officers and people involved in the incident.

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Marla Ruzicka, Rachel Corrie and "Credibility"

By Alexander Cockburn

Whatever sour emotions I entertained while reading accounts of the funeral of Marla Ruzicka had nothing really to do with the death on April 16 of a brave young woman in Baghdad. On many accounts,—and I have had a detailed conversation with a close friend of Marla's whose judgment I respect,—she was an idealistic person whose prime political flaw seems to have been the very forgivable one of naivety.

Both in Afghanistan and Iraq, in furtherance of her humanitarian schemes, Marla Ruzicka elected a stance of studious neutrality in ascribing responsibility for the victims of US bombings and ground fire. This pursuit of "credibility" certainly yielded its ironic reward in the political range of those who publicly mourned her.

A US senator,—Barbara Boxer,—attended Ruzicka's funeral in Lakeport, northern California. Bob Herbert of the *New York Times* poured out an emotional column honoring Ruzicka. So did Robert L. Pollock, a writer for the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page. "America has lost a peerless and unique ambassador," Pollock wrote on April 19. "[S]he stood out from the crowd of journalists and self-proclaimed humanitarians—far too many of whom believed their mission was to bear witness to an American misadventure in Iraq that would, and should, fail."

The sourness in my soul stemmed from a contrast. Almost exactly two years earlier, on March 16, 2003, another brave young woman in a foreign land lost her life, not to a suicide bomber, but under the blade of a 47-ton bulldozer made in America by the Caterpillar company specifically for house demolitions and driven by an Israeli soldier. Maybe, in the last seconds of his life, that suicide bomber in Baghdad never even saw Ruzicka. The soldier in Gaza surely saw Corrie, clearly visible in her fluorescent orange jacket, and rolled the bulldozer blade right over her.

No US senator attended Rachel's funeral after her parents brought her home to the state of Washington. Both US senators ran in the opposite direction. Later the Corries disclosed that after their return to the US with their daughter's body, they contacted their US Senators, Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell, both Democrats, and told them how their daughter had been deliberately murdered while peacefully demonstrating against house demolitions, which are violations of international law. Murray and Cantwell, the Corries recall, were quick with expressions of outrage and promises of investigations. The Corries never heard from Murray or Cantwell again.

Cindy Corrie's mailbox filled with disgusting letters abusing her for being a bad mother, and the Israel-right-or-wrong crowd began an unrelenting campaign of abuse of Rachel, to the overall effect that she had it coming to her, that "She was defending terrorists who smuggle weapons across the border to kill Israelis", that the International Solidarity Movement of which she was a member, was a terrorist symp group.

As Professor Steve Niva of Evergreen State College in Olympia wrote on this site shortly after Corrie's death, "There is no evidence that Dr. Samir Nasrallah, whose house Rachel was defending, or anyone in this neighborhood were concealing any tunnels or were engaged in any attacks on Israelis. The Israeli army doesn't even make this insupportable claim. His house was being demolished because, like dozens of others that have been bulldozed in Hay Salaam, his home was near the 'Apartheid Wall' Israel was building. Moreover, the ISM has a policy of only protecting homes that are not suspected to be involved in tunnel activities."

Niva duly received a torrent of e-mailed abuse.

And how did the Israel-right-or-wrong crowd on the Evergreen campus react? Did Corrie's murder prompt them to any serious reflection on Applied Zionism in Gaza? No. Niva tells me that after some initial heartfelt expressions of sadness for Corrie, the small Zionist groups began complaining that they felt uncomfortable as Jews to be on campus, and a few started raising concerns about alleged anti-Israel and possibly anti-Semitic sentiments getting a free pass at Evergreen. They started to peddle charges about the Middle East Studies faculty—and rumors began to circulate at the local synagogue that there was a "crisis" regarding Jews at Evergreen. Slurs against Niva continue to this day, as they do against Corrie.

> The Corries never heard from Murray or Cantwell again.

Mother Jones ran a 7,000 word attack on Corrie and ISM, later convincingly demonstrated by Olympia's Phan Nguyen to have been plagiarized from extreme right sites and sources. Nor was there measured lamentation from the *Wall Street Journal*'s editorial page which surpassed itself in foam-flecked savagery in a piece by Ruhama Shattan, which managed to blame Corrie for the bombing death of the State Department officials that occurred in Gaza in October, 2004! Shattan's piece had already run in the Jerusalem Post and actually prompted the press attache in the US embassy in Tel Aviv, Paul Patin, to write a letter to the Post denouncing it as "hateful incitement" and "disgusting abuse of the anniversary of the death of this American citizen". Maybe this letter is what prompted the *WSJ*'s editorial page editor, Paul Gigot, to see Shattan's diatribe as suitable material for his pages.

Marla Ruzicka decided to work within the system, as they say. Maybe, given the aims of her organization, CIVIC, that was an appropriate choice. I'm not inclined to pass judgment on that. The "system" duly mourned and honored her. Rachel Corrie saw that the "system", with all its innumerable and fraudulent roadmaps, negotiated solutions, Oslo frameworks, processes of peace and so forth had not stopped, nay, was encouraging the daily outrages of demolitions of Palestinian homes and kindred barbarities. Corrie stood in the path of that system and died, and her murder was covered up by Israel and by the government of her own country.

Marla Ruzicka, 28-year-old founder of CIVIC (Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict), pictured with some of those directly impacted by the US war on Iraq.

Nasrallah Family to Visit Olympia

by Jennifer Zahn Spieler

[Reprinted with permission from The Sitting Duck.*]*

Most people know how Rachel Corrie was killed: she was crushed by an Israeli bulldozer. But why she was in front of "that bulldozer" is often overlooked.

Television commentator Ken Schram, in a 216-word rant against the Corries' decision to sue Caterpillar Inc (manufacturer of the bulldozer), has said Rachel was killed "…as she defiantly stood in front of a home that the Israeli military was in the process of demolishing." Schram's phrasing suggests the place was vacant.

Only it wasn't. A pharmacist, Dr Samir Nasrallah, lived on the main floor with his wife and three children; upstairs were his brother, Khaled Nasrallah, with his wife and two daughters. All were displaced when the home was demolished.

The Nasrallahs are the family Rachel Corrie died to protect. Who are they? Olympians will soon have the opportunity to find out. Three members of the family are coming to Olympia through the efforts of the Rachel Corrie Rebuilding Alliance Project in Gaza.

Khaled Nasrallah, his wife Samah, and baby daughter Sama will appear at St John's Episcopal Church June 18.

Rachel Corrie's mother, says that Olympians can show the Nasrallahs that Americans care about their plight.

"By our being there we send a message that we are paying attention, that we care about what happened," Cindie Corrie said.

Craig Corrie, Rachel's father, has tried to imagine what it would be like to live in Gaza, which is under constant siege. He and Cindy spent six days there in 2003 following Rachel's death.

"Of all feelings, the worst must be the feeling of abandonment," Mr Corrie said.

Mr Nasrallah is an accountant; Samah is studying to become a teacher. Their daughters Noor and Maryam will remain in Gaza with relatives during this trip.

Olympia is one stop on a three-week journey that will also take the family to Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland and Seattle, and then on to the Midwest. There will be educational fundraisers at each stop. The Rebuilding Alliance hopes to raise $40,000 to rebuild the Nasrallah home. Dr Samir's family will help to reunite everyone under one roof.

Donna Schumann, along with her husband Mark Brodeck, were contacted by ther alliance to arrange the event. Ms Schumann said she has "no idea" how they got her name, but assumes it must have been as a result of contacts made while traveling in the Middle East. When she spoke with The Sitting Duck, Ms Schumann was excited to report that the Nasrallahs had been granted visas by the US.

"Of course, they still have to be able to get out of Gaza," she said.

Palestinians must pass through Israeli checkpoints in order leave the Occupied Territories; often, they are arbitrarily denied exit.

The Corries believe rebuilding the Nasrallah home is an important first step in restoring some sense of normalcy to the family's life.

"The process of rebuilding is central for healing," said Craig Corrie. "How it's done is so important. You can't just throw something up and stuff people into it. There has to be some dignity."

Meet the Nasrallahs

Khaled, Samah and Sama Nasrallah will be at St. John's Episcopal Church, 114 - 20th Ave SE, Olympia, **June 18**, 2005, **7:00 p.m.**, Admission is by donation

Event co-sponsors are the Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace & Justice, the Olympia Friends Meeting, Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Olympia-Rafah Sister City Project, Veterans for Peace – Rachel Corrie Chapter, and St John's Episcopal Church.

Rachel Corrie with the Nasrallah family whose home in Rafah she died defending.

Across the thirty years that I have written about the vast injustice done to Palestinians by successive Israeli governments, condoned and paid for by the US, I have read a thousand admonitions to support what peace plan was in train, to espouse solutions with "credibility". And here we are now, when all the peace plans and roadmaps stand definitively revealed as the frauds they always were. Any imagined evacuation of Israeli settlements from Gaza is pure distraction. The story lies in the new settlements stretching out from East Jerusalem, amputating any conceivably viable Palestinian state. In this enterprise, there's no "case for Israel" beyond violent, illegal occupation and eviction. Two years after her murder I honor Rachel Corrie and enquire of those supposedly reasonable voices on the Zionist side of the aisle here in the United States, What have you got to say for yourselves now?

"Opting Out"

by Molly Gibbs

The articles and email regarding the persistent presence of military recruiters in schools hit an all time high this last week. In recent months several messages have come from high school students seeking assistance for protection of their civil rights. Many questions are surfacing around the country:

• What is the role of the military in our schools?

• If recruiters are given the same rights accorded other post-secondary recruiters, do those same rules apply to individuals or groups expressing concerns about the misinformation given to students?

• Full Disclosure is a large concern for parents and students. Many in our local schools do not know about No Child Left Behind legislation, under Section 9528 of the law, which requires public schools to report all private student information to the military, or risk losing their federal funding. There are Opt-Out forms, simple to complete, that students or parents can submit to their schools, requesting that their personal information not be released to the military.

Many schools struggle to balance their desire to protect student privacy against the threat of losing federal education funding. Prior to NCLB about half of all schools denied the military access to campuses.

The Pentagon sent a colonel to visit William Cala, a Fairport school superintendent just outside Rochester, NY. The reason for the visit is to pressure Mr. Cala to release students' names, addresses and phone numbers to the military.

Cala describes how the Fairport Board of Education has a long-standing policy that "we don't share student information with anybody—period." Locally, this type of leadership is unheard of; schools in our area continue to "support" our troops.

Military Recruiters Must Await "Opt-In" Before Contacting

Yesterday, Representative Mike Honda of CA introduced the Opt-In legislation in HR 2551. **US Rep. Mike Honda** (D-San Jose) yesterday introduced the Student Privacy Protection Act, legislation that prohibits military recruiters from contacting students unless these minors and their parents specifically "opt-in" and consent to receive such communications.

"While I support the right of the armed services to recruit high school students, I don't believe successful military recruitment efforts require access to students' personal information without their consent," Congressman Honda said. "The right to divulge or not divulge personal information about minors should remain with the students and their parents."

The current system contains no defined process or procedure for opting out—for either parents or schools—and many schools simply give up their students' information, often without notification. One local parent contacted me wanting to know what she could do when her student continues to get calls from recruiters after she's filed an Opt Out form.

The range of options narrows if the school is not willing to support one's Tenth Amendment rights.

The Student Privacy Protection Act will require parents and students to *opt-in* before military recruiters may contact the minors. Parents and students know what groups will receive the minors' personal information, giving students and their parents greater control over this personal information.

May 20, National Recruiter's "Day Off"

Let's examine just two basic omissions and misrepresentations given by recruiters to impressionable students.

1. The sole purpose of the military is to train you to kill—[not to provide you with an education].

2. You'll receive great health benefits—[VA benefits have been cut and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder rates are close to 50% at a recent national gathering of war vets. This disorder impacts families as well as returning soldiers].

Twenty percent of all GI's use their educational benefits, as compared to the 70% of students who receive student loans. The Enlistment contract tells you that the promises made to you by recruiters are null and void when you sign.

You can, however opt out of allowing the military to contact you by completing a simple form and turning it in to your school.

The question for school boards is: What is your loco parentis obligation to students? When will you be held accountable for allowing recruiters to avoid the truth about war, forcefully seduce students to sign a legal contract, and engage in that process prior to age 18? Nowhere else does this contract sales pitch take place with minors. Children are to be protected from abusive behavior, and from making choices that result in their physical or psychological harm, let alone death.

The Enlistment contract tells you that the promises made to you by recruiters are null and void when you sign.

Let's be clear that recruiters are victims of a system that threatens them with infantry service if they don't make their quotas. We read about increased illness, depression and suicide among the recruiters.

We will see what the national day of "reviewing Army recruiting policies and standards" brings. I expect sexual harassment, preying on low self esteem and lies to continue as pressure builds.

"What's happening May 20th is a coordinated effort to coach approximately 6000 recruiters in new sales pitches to bag the unsuspecting teens, and deflect 10 or 20 of the most powerful criticisms and challenges from parents and schools," reflects Todd Boyle of Washington Truth in Recruitment.

We will continue to see the effects of a $4 billion (2005) high tech recruitment budget, using Army Adventure Vans, video war games, insidious advertisements (the snowboard ad comes to mind—soldiers in full battle gear, adorned with snowboard cap and goggles).

Army recruiters will be vigorously counter-attacking parents, schools and activists with a dozen new sound-bites.

If you are interested in getting Opt Out information into local schools, or volunteering to plan our upcoming Forum titled **Know All You Can Know**, please contact Molly Gibbs at mgibbs@olywa.net

Torture's Dirty Secret: It Works

by Naomi Klein

I recently caught a glimpse of the effects of torture in action at an event honoring Maher Arar. The Syrian-born Canadian is the world's most famous victim of "rendition," the process by which US officials outsource torture to foreign countries. Arar was switching planes in New York when US interrogators detained him and "rendered" him to Syria, where he was held for ten months in a cell slightly larger than a grave and taken out periodically for beatings.

Arar was being honored for his courage by the Canadian Council on American-Islamic Relations, a mainstream advocacy organization. The audience gave him a heartfelt standing ovation, but there was fear mixed in with the celebration. Many of the prominent community leaders kept their distance from Arar, responding to him only tentatively. Some speakers were unable even to mention the honored guest by name, as if he had something they could catch. And perhaps they were right: The tenuous "evidence"—later discredited—that landed Arar in a rat-infested cell was guilt by association. And if that could happen to Arar, a successful software engineer and family man, who is safe?

In a rare public speech, Arar addressed this fear directly. He told the audience that an independent commissioner has been trying to gather evidence of law-enforcement officials breaking the rules when investigating Muslim Canadians. The commissioner has heard dozens of stories of threats, harassment and inappropriate home visits. But, Arar said, "not a single person made a public complaint. Fear prevented them from doing so." Fear of being the next Maher Arar.

The fear is even thicker among Muslims in the United States, where the Patriot Act gives police the power to seize the records of any mosque, school, library or community group on mere suspicion of terrorist links. When this intense surveillance is paired with the ever-present threat of torture, the message is clear: You are being watched, your neighbor may be a spy, the government can find out anything about you. If you misstep, you could disappear onto a plane bound for Syria, or into "the deep dark hole that is Guantánamo Bay," to borrow a phrase from Michael Ratner, president of the Center for Constitutional Rights.

But this fear has to be finely calibrated. The people being intimidated need to know enough to be afraid but not so much that they demand justice. This helps explain why the Defense Department will release certain kinds of seemingly incriminating information about Guantánamo—pictures of men in cages, for instance—at the same time that it acts to suppress photographs on a par with what escaped from Abu Ghraib. And it might also explain why the Pentagon approved the new book by a former military translator, including the passages about prisoners being sexually humiliated, but prevented him from writing about the widespread use of attack dogs. This strategic leaking of information, combined with official denials, induces a state of mind that Argentines describe as "knowing/not knowing," a vestige of their "dirty war."

"Obviously, intelligence agents have an incentive to hide the use of unlawful methods," says the ACLU's Jameel Jaffer. "On the other hand, when they use rendition and torture as a threat, it's undeniable that they benefit, in some sense, from the fact that people know that intelligence agents are willing to act unlawfully. They benefit from the fact that people understand the threat and believe it to be credible."

And the threats have been received. In an affidavit filed with an ACLU court challenge to Section 215 of the Patriot Act, Nazih Hassan, president of the Muslim Community Association of Ann Arbor, Michigan, describes this new climate. Membership and attendance are down, donations are way down, board members have resigned—Hassan says his members fear doing anything that could get their names on lists. One member testified anonymously that he has "stopped speaking out on political and social issues" because he doesn't want to draw attention to himself.

This is torture's true purpose: to terrorize—not only the people in Guantánamo's cages and Syria's isolation cells but also, and more important, the broader community that hears about these abuses. Torture is a machine designed to break the will to resist—the individual prisoner's will and the collective will.

▸ **Torture's Dirty Secret** *continued pg 9*

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▸ **Torture's Dirty Secret** *from page 8*

This is not a controversial claim. In 2001 the US NGO Physicians for Human Rights published a manual on treating torture survivors that noted: "perpetrators often attempt to justify their acts of torture and ill treatment by the need to gather information. Such conceptualizations obscure the purpose of torture….The aim of torture is to dehumanize the victim, break his/her will, and at the same time, set horrific examples for those who come in contact with the victim. In this way, torture can break or damage the will and coherence of entire communities."

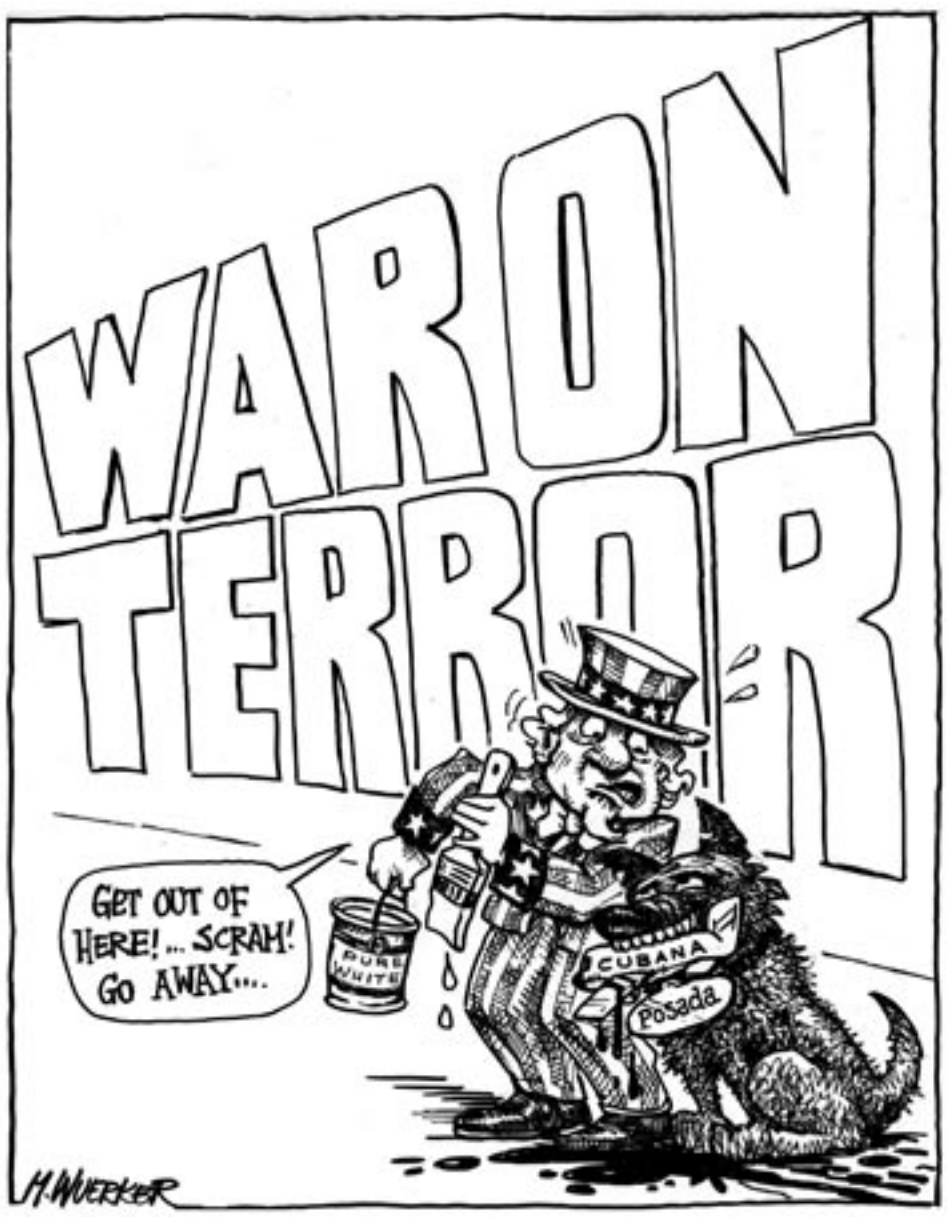
Yet despite this body of knowledge, torture continues to be debated in the United States as if it were merely a morally questionable way to extract information, not an instrument of state terror. But there's a problem: No one claims that torture is an effective interrogation tool—least of all the people who practice it. Torture "doesn't work. There are better ways to deal with captives," CIA director Porter Goss told the Senate Intelligence Committee on February 16. And a recently declassified memo written by an FBI official in Guantánamo states that extreme coercion produced "nothing more than what FBI got using simple investigative techniques." The Army's own interrogation field manual states that force "can induce the source to say whatever he thinks the interrogator wants to hear."

> If you misstep, you could disappear onto a plane bound for Syria, or into "the deep dark hole that is Guantánamo Bay,"

And yet the abuses keep on coming—Uzbekistan as the new hot spot for renditions; the "El Salvador model" imported to Iraq. And the only sensible explanation for torture's persistent popularity comes from a most unlikely source. Lynndie England, the fall girl for Abu Ghraib, was asked during her botched trial why she and her colleagues had forced naked prisoners into a human pyramid. "As a way to control them," she replied.

Exactly. As an interrogation tool, torture is a bust. But when it comes to social control, nothing works quite like torture.

Published on Thursday, May 12, 2005 by The Nation. Naomi Klein is the author of No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies (Picador) and, most recently, Fences and Windows: Dispatches From the Front Lines of the Globalization Debate (Picador).



Know All You Can Know

Seeking to create alternatives to the "power over" mode

by Molly Gibbs

This is Mother's Day in Olympia. Today my heart and prayers are with the mother whose seventh grade son took his life. I awoke at 4 am thinking I could not sleep if I lost my son to repeated acts of bullying. This couldn't happen in one of Olympia's Middle Schools? My young Chinese American friend has experienced racially motivated bullying at school. She tells her mother that kids do not seek help when this happens because they fear retaliation. Wonderful children are suffering in our community and parents need to take action, beginning in our homes.

We need volunteers in our schools trained in non-violent communication; and adults in schools need administrative support for making the safety of our children a priority. Bullying cannot be tolerated, and racial intolerance is not a value in Olympia. The acceptance of violence in our society is connected to things we witness daily: violence in sports, video games and movies (often orchestrated by the Pentagon's large media budget which keeps Hollywood movies supplied with high tech weaponry and high decibel explosions, graphic destruction). What drives intolerance? You may add to these observations:

- our acceptance of competition [as the model for success in sports, business;]
- the belief that we have winners and losers;
- a blindness to white privilege; and
- the focus on our limited resources.

I have enjoyed working with college students this past year to develop a program to make sure high school students receive factual information about the military, both during and after service. *Know All You Can Know* is a unique program where college students team with high school students to learn critical thinking skills. We view films together, and support student clubs or activities to explore peace and justice issues. Dialogue and communication skills are the basis for our program. We discuss and seek to create alternatives to the "power over" model that drives our corporate government, and shapes our society. One curriculum we have been asked to develop by a group of local teachers focuses on Truth and Reconciliation as a model for managing conflict. This is very different in its results for victim and perpetrator, when contrasted with our court system. The judicial system produces winners and losers, and your case is decided based on determinations of "right" or "wrong," where it is difficult to fully examine how all parties may have responsibility for the outcomes. We look at issues regarding authority, at what happens when some have power and others do not. (In school, who has power among students? What happens if I seek help from an adult and another student finds out?)

Know All You Can Know offers internships and Contract opportunities to all local college students who are interested. We provide information about post-secondary opportunities for low-income and minority students and develop classroom curriculum to promote peace, critical thinking, and civic leadership.

I am filled with grief for the family who lost their son to violence in our schools. We can each look more deeply into how we might be spectators to, or supporters of, violence.

We can contact our Federal legislators to support the proposed Department of Peace, HR 1673, which addresses international and domestic violence, and provides support for nonviolent communication training.

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Buy Your Gas at Citgo: Join the BUY-cott!

by Jeff Cohen

Looking for an easy way to protest Bush foreign policy week after week? And an easy way to help alleviate global poverty? Buy your gasoline at Citgo stations.

And tell your friends.

Of the top oil producing countries in the world, only one is a democracy with a president who was elected on a platform of using his nation's oil revenue to benefit the poor. The country is Venezuela. The President is Hugo Chavez. Call him "the Anti-Bush."

Citgo is a U.S. refining and marketing firm that is a wholly owned subsidiary of Venezuela's state-owned oil company. Money you pay to Citgo goes primarily to Venezuela—not Saudi Arabia or the Middle East. There are 14,000 Citgo gas stations in the US. (Go to http://www.citgo.com/CITGOLocator/StoreLocator.jsp to find one near you.) By buying your gasoline at Citgo, you are contributing to the billions of dollars that Venezuela's democratic government is using to provide health care, literacy and education, and subsidized food for the majority of Venezuelans.

Instead of using government to help the rich and the corporate, as Bush does, Chavez is using the resources and oil revenue of his government to help the poor in Venezuela. A country with so much oil wealth shouldn't have 60 percent of its people living in poverty, earning less than $2 per day. With a mass movement behind him, Chavez is confronting poverty in Venezuela. That's why large majorities have consistently backed him in democratic elections. And why the Bush administration supported an attempted military coup in 2002 that sought to overthrow Chavez.

So this is the opposite of a boycott. Call it a BUYcott. Spread the word.

Of course, if you can take mass transit or bike or walk to your job, you should do so. And we should all work for political changes that move our country toward a cleaner environment based on renewable energy. The BUYcott is for those of us who don't have a practical alternative to filling up our cars.

So get your gas at Citgo. And help fuel a democratic revolution in Venezuela.

Jeff Cohen is an author and media critic (www.jeffcohen.org)

Strategizing event on July 9

New Strategy Needed: "Bringing It Home: Local Organizing Against the War"

by Emily Lardner

In the early 1930's, John Dewey wrote that the public has no hands except those of individuals. There is no public, only individuals who decide to act on behalf of themselves and of others, including people who live far away. The U.S. is engaged in a war that is illegal under international law, a war that has no justification. Hundreds of thousands of people are suffering and dying, their lives and homes are being destroyed. Hundreds of thousands of people in the U.S. have expressed their view that the war is wrong. A majority of Americans think the war was a mistake. However, nothing is changing. On July 9, a group of Thurston County residents will gather at a downtown location to design a local campaign to withdraw support for the war. The purpose of coming together is to develop a concrete plan for mobilizing enough citizen support to actually bring about change at a local level.

We need a new strategy. Demonstrating against the war has not been enough. The question is, how can we act collectively to withdraw our support for the war and the local practices that support it? How can we stop military recruiting in the high schools? How can we stop military shipments from going through our port? What other creative actions can we envision and carry out to deny our support for the war?

In spite of demonstrations at the port, the port commissioners report that the decision to ship military supplies is simply a business decision. Shipments are increasing. What can we do? Simply demonstrating will not change the status quo. The lessons we can learn from successful community organizing around the world are, first, figure out concretely what to change, and then mobilize people from all parts of the community—business, labor, churches, media, government officials—who work together, persistently, until the status quo changes. Key actions required include building allies throughout the community, public actions and demonstrations which dramatize the effects of the war, providing news and information about the war that the regular media avoids, regular presence at the port commission, city council and other meetings —until finally it is impossible to carry on business as usual. Only then will change come.

Imagine that the people in Thurston county decide that too many Iraqi people have suffered and died because of our government's illegal and ungrounded war. We decide to take a public, practical stance against the war, right now. We decide to register our dissent in a collaborative and concrete way. We say together: we don't want military shipments in our port. Acting on behalf of others, we work together until those ships are no longer in our port, and military recruiters no longer have free access to our children. Imagine that groups throughout the county—including churches, schools, neighborhood associations, unions, parenting groups, clubs—worked together to bring this about.

Yul Gamboa, a local organizer, puts it this way: "The question is, who is in control? Who will determine what happens in our community? This war is an illegal war. We don't want to participate in it. But unless we learn to organize differently, more effectively, for sustained periods of time, a simple no—even a demonstration—means the status quo continues. We need enough interruptions in the ordinary running of things to bring the process to a halt. Then change can happen. That's what people know around the world, and we can learn it here. People feel good when you win one battle. Fight one front, and learn from that one struggle how to organize successfully on another front. But first, decide what to focus on. One thing. The port. Military recruiting in the high schools. Build momentum by successfully addressing one issue, with material outcomes."

The purpose of the gathering on July 9, "Bringing it Home: Local Organizing Against the War," is to develop a strategy for resisting the war through concrete, local efforts. We will meet from 9-3 downtown, with food and singing and serious planning. We are inspired by nonviolent resistance movements around the world, and we are also excited about our collective possibilities. "Bringing it Home: Local Organizing Against the War" is co-sponsored by Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace, and the Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation.

If you will share your ideas and energy with us on July 9 for practical action to stop the war, or are interested in helping to organize the day, please contact one of the coordinators: Tom Crawford (280-0242; tcpraxis@comcast.net) or Emily Lardner (705-3678; hungrytigerofoz@hotmail.com).

Military vessel, USNS Pililaau, carrying equipment back from the Iraq war, is the largest on record to unload at the Port of Olympia.

Venezuelan President Says He Will Not Return to U.S. Until Americans "liberate" Their Nation

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez and Fidel Castro laugh during an anti-Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) meeting in Havana April 28, 2005. The two leaders are seeking to build an alternative to the U.S.-backed FTAA, from which Cuba is excluded.

by Andrea Rodriguez

HAVANA—Declaring that U.S. citizens are oppressed by their own government, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez promised Friday that he would not visit the United States again until Americans "liberate" their nation.

Chavez, in Havana for trade talks, told an international gathering of activists here that before an earlier trip to Cuba, a U.S. State Department undersecretary he did not identify warned him not to go because he would no longer be received in Washington.

He said he went ahead with that trip anyway, and later traveled to the United States to visit U.S. President George W. Bush, who he said greeted him with a Coca-Cola in his hand.

"I have not returned, nor do I think about returning again, until the people of the United States liberate that nation," said Chavez, saying that Americans are "oppressed" by their government and U.S. media.

While Chavez didn't elaborate, the implication was that he wouldn't return to the United States until the current administration was out of power.

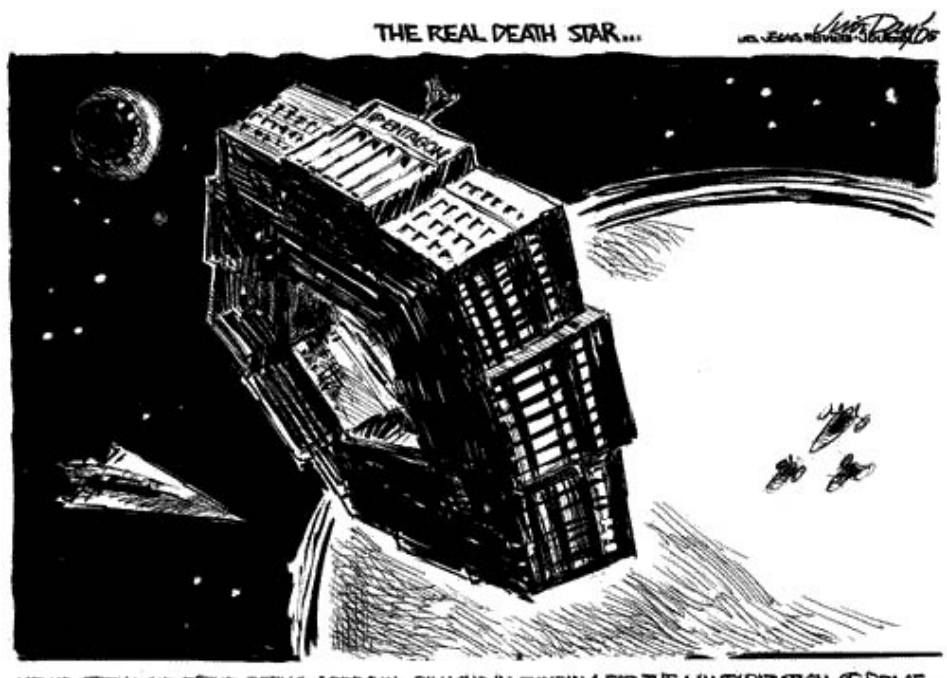
Chavez considers Cuban President Fidel Castro a political ally and close personal friend, and Washington has grown increasingly alarmed by their deepening political and economic alliance.

During Chavez's current visit, the two countries have signed a host of economic and other accords, including a deal for Cuba to buy US$412 million (euro319 million) in goods from the South American nation, with Cuba waiving all import duties.

Venezuela's state oil company also has opened an office here this week, agreeing to help explore for and refine any crude deposits discovered off the island's coast. It also announced that the 53,000 barrels it has been sending to Cuba since 2000 at preferential terms was recently increased to up to 90,000 barrels daily.

Chavez also criticized the current Latin American tour by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, referring to her as an "imperial lady" who is trying to divide and conquer the hemisphere's developing nations.

Despite Chavez's anti-U.S. comments, his country is the world's fifth largest oil exporter and a top crude supplier to the United States.



May 1st Nuclear Disarmament Actions in New York City

by Holly GG

One of the things I do is to sing for the GNAWNP. Don't try to say it. Just understand that it is a group working very hard internationally to keep the US from arming space in the interests of ruling the world.

Like me, you may applaud this resistance, since the US is proving to be terribly bad at ruling its fledgling empire on the planet, let alone the one it wants to rule from space.

"Luke," breathes Darth Vader, "I'm your president." Join me in the sob of denial. Here's my report on what we've been doing.

The Global Network against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space was established by Bruce Gagnon in Florida in 1998 to curtail NASA's plutonium-powered space launches like the Cassini probe to Saturn. It has developed into an informed body also working to stop Theatre Missile Defense and Star Wars. The GN met in NYC over the last two days of April to discuss the impact of these programs around the world.

A serious obstacle to global disarmament is US determination to move the arms race into space. The US drive for "full spectrum dominance" is forcing other nations to believe they must maintain their existing nuclear forces or develop new nuclear arsenals as a deterrent. Bush has taken nuclear disarmament off the foreign policy agenda, yet he lectures the rest of the world about the evils of weapons of mass destruction.

Joining the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and Abolition 2000, the Global Network affirms space as an environment of peace for all nations, and empowers activism in this vein.

Our conference featured a keynote address by Dr. Michio Kaku, string field theorist, physicist, CUNY professor, radio show host and anti-Star Wars activist. A protege of the late nuclear cheerleader Dr. Edward Teller, who influenced Ronald Reagan's conception of a blanket missile defense shield, Kaku quit working for military nuclear space programs once he realized the threat to life on earth. Vowing never to work on Star Wars and TMD technology, his petition to this end has been signed by 10,000 of the world's top scientists.

TMD thinly masks the real ambition of the US to rule the earth from space. It has legs in Alaska, Florida, Australia, Greenland, Germany, the UK and South America. New nuclear missile silos and spy bases are being installed or exist already in these locations without the permission or knowledge of citizens. Despite the fact that TMD tests fail 50% of the time and test results are faked, billions of dollars pour into this attempt to weaponize the global commons of space. US invasions and military movements are coordinated using space-based technology.

Kaku says conservatives call the movement for US space domination "the New Rome". We all know what happened to Rome. "Keep up the pressure to end this insanity", Kaku encouraged us. "The will of the people will prevail."

> TMD thinly masks the real ambition of the US to rule the earth from space.

We took heart that Canada had the will to say No to supporting TMD after grassroots organizers and demonstrations clearly told the Prime Minister of their opposition.

These days, every NASA launch has a military component. Using plutonium to power these launches, the next one is called Project Prometheus. Aimed at exploring the one moon of Jupiter that could support life, sinking a plutonium probe into one of Europa's ice-covered seas is nuts. Remember what happened to Prometheus?

Solar powered missions are possible and being used in Europe successfully and harmlessly! NASA's refusal to use solar plays into the military plan.

Militarizing space has already happened, but the ARMING of space has not yet occurred, and that's what we need to avoid.

The military has a strange little room at NASA Space Center in Huntsville, Alabama (home of the big buffets) guarded 24-7 by off-duty enlistees. There one finds a charming display of weapons to be deployed in space to keep us 'safe' from the "have-nots" of the globe. Armed surveillance satellites, nuclear-powered laser beams aimed at the earth are designed to curtail any resistance including from friendly nations. No country is exempt from this new arms race and that's just what George Bush and the neo-cons want.

The USA has the most weapons of mass destruction! We have a huge fleet of Trident submarines right next door in Bangor with the capacity to take out hundreds of thousands of people with nuclear missiles. We don't need new subs, new weapons of terror.

And if you think the cold war with Russia is over, it's not.

According to Dr Helen Caldicott, Russia never removed target sites on the US when Communism failed. And we never removed our targets either… so both countries are on hair-trigger alert for nuclear annihilation any time, detante or no.

Time for nuclear disarmament! Say NO to a president that can't pronounce nuclear as he decrees a buildup of our nuclear stockpile and the creation of smaller and "better' nukes like the bunker buster. Remember...no proliferation without pronunciation!

And so, on May 1st, an estimated 35,000 people from all over the world marched to demand international nuclear disarmament and an end to war marking the beginning of international Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and Disarmament talks at the United Nations.

More than 100 Mayors for Peace from across America and Japan joined the call. Olympia's own Mark Foutch is a mayor for peace. He sent TJ Johnson as his representative for the march and the talks. Our message to world leaders was clear...end the nuclear nightmare, disarm the bombs, end the occupations of Iraq and Palestine, and say "never again" to the threat of nuclear annihilation.

The march ended at the southwestern end of Central Park for the rally sponsored by Abolition 2000 and United for Peace and Justice. There, I performed a call-and-response song that was sung back to me in full voice by thousands gathered on that beautiful spring day. It was an honor to be on the program among eloquent speakers and performers.

Locally, August 3rd marks the beginning of Beyond Hiroshima week here in Olympia with a panel featuring Bruce Gagnon, among others, followed by a wide weeklong series of events including a poster exhibit, a street concert, children's events, movies and more. See www.beyondhiroshima.org for details.

We say Beyond Hiroshima because enough is enough! Nuclear weapons are a crime against the earth, humanity, and life to come. This includes nuclear stockpiles, 'depleted' uranium-coated missiles, and artillery shells. "Depleted" uranium has a half-life of 4.5 billion years! It's done its damage on the genepool of everyone in Iraq, Kosovo, and Afghanistan. Radiation poisoning from DU has irrevocably damaged every Gulf War vet, their families, and the hapless inhabitants of nations we've attacked with 'limited' nuclear weapons.

It's time to add your voice to the millions of world citizens who are done with supporting this kind of insanity. As thousands of us said in New York City on May 1st... Fulfill the dream! An end to war! It's not a hopeless dream. It's the only one left. It's the only way we can survive.

We are the ones we have been waiting for.

▸ **Trojan Horse** *from page 1*

The result of these efforts was evident in that 5 to 1 vote for Westfield, which did not surprise me based on reactions I received earlier in my research efforts.

When I approached a council member shortly after beginning my research and stated that "Westfield could be Wal-Marts' Trojan horse", it was as if I had tasered them! They immediately sputtered something about, we need that revenue to keep the roads paved etc., etc., etc. I knew then that Westfield would succeed in getting their exemption, as Bob Dylan wrote in one of his songs, "Money doesn't talk….it screams."

In Westfield's case money screams around the world, from New South Wales, Auckland New Zealand, Sydney, Australia, Great Britain, Ireland and all across America you can hear the echoes of it. In Australia questions about Westfield lobbying the government and the government responding to Westfield's benefit caused a lot of concern. Here's a quote from an article written July 16, 2004 at Crikey.com in Australia by Bill Eclairs and Stephen Mayne, which will aid in creating a clearer picture of Westfield:

"Westfield has no qualms in paying whoever they like to get their shopping centres built and to prevent competitors from cropping up. Try this list for size:

• Ken Hooper was paid more than $100,000 to create a bogus community group

• CFMEU (Construction, Forest, Mining and Energy Union) got $80,000 for industrial piece on 3 Victorian sites

• $750,000 for British Labor Party funds raiser and Blair mate Lord Levy

• $100,000 to green groups opposing a rival shopping centre outside Sacramento

• Millions each year in political donations around the world

• $70,000 defamation settlement to a Gold Coast councilor who allegedly changed his stance on a planning approval

These scandals were serious enough to warrant these remarks from the Chairman's address at a meeting of members of Westfield Holdings, LTD, on Monday, April 29, 2002:

"I'd like to take this opportunity to talk to you about a few issues arising from recent media reports dealing with our business in the United Kingdom and United States… Firstly, I'd like to explain how we go about establishing ourselves in a new market. Entering a new market is a tough business. I don't simply arrive at Kennedy Airport in New York, or Heathrow in London or Amsterdam Airport, and hang out a sign saying: "We want to buy shopping centres" and sit back waiting to be bowled over with offers… We spend a long time-years-getting to know the market, who the key players are, forging relationships and potential associations, making ourselves known to people and institutions which might one day lead to an opportunity for Westfield. To undertake this task we retain a wide range of consultants, advisers, bankers-and not all of them work out. We invest considerable sums of money in this process that is commensurate with the scale of our business. Lord Levy was one such consultant and we asked him to explore business opportunities for us. Lord Levy undertook no political lobbying or government-related work on our behalf. To gain approvals in the UK, we deal with local councils, as we do here in Australia and elsewhere…"

"I come now to the second issue, which is about protecting and increasing asset value for shareholders… As part of the company's asset management responsibilities we monitor the market and assess the various opportunities and threats to our business, and sometimes this results in us opposing a rival development."

"Media reports last week dealt with our support of third parties that are opposing rival developments, in this case for community and environmental groups who shared a common interest with us in wanting to prevent a particular mall development from going ahead… Now please understand that I don't pretend we get it right every time. Sometimes we slip up and in this area we got it wrong at the Arnott's site here in Sydney a few years ago."

This is the company that members of the Olympia City Council exempted from the moratorium in order to 'build trust' and bring in $300 million in revenues, both staff and council members stating that there is very little risk that Westfield will bring in one of the big box retailers, such as Wal-Mart. Let us all hope that they are correct and that this does not turn out to be misplaced trust. I for one, feel that the risk of Capital Mall being a new location for a large Wal-Mart Supercenter is very high. I will be very happy if I am proven wrong.

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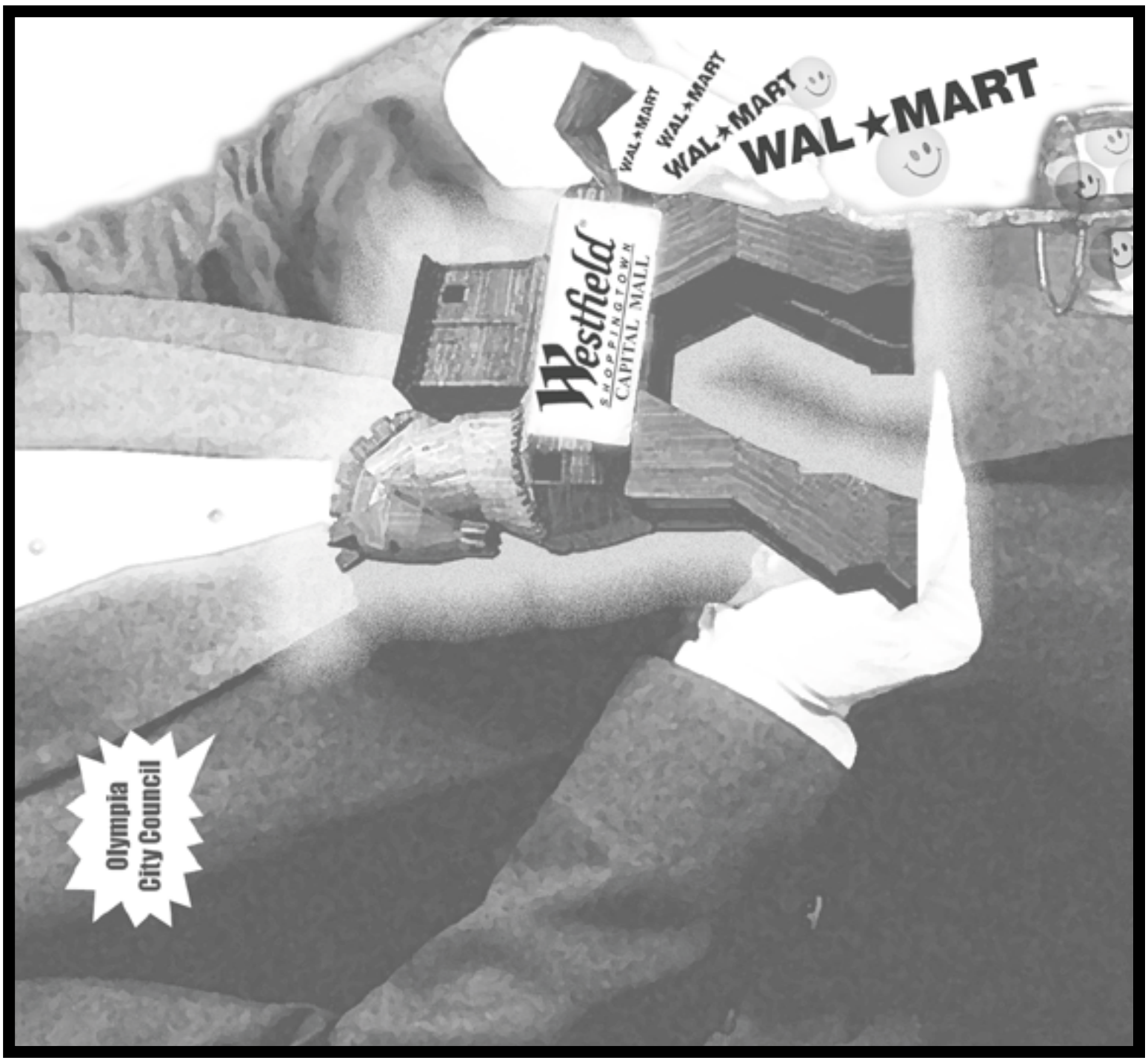

Contents

1

Wal-Mart's Trojan Horse?
by Trudy Springer

Letters from Baghdad
by Joe Carr

5

Procession Letter
by Max Brown

Open Letter to City Council
by Vince Brown

6

Bush Has Grasped the Third Rail, Now Turn on the Juice
By Dave Lindorff

Olympia Police Accountability
Drew Hendricks

7

Marla Ruzicka and Rachel Corrie
By Alexander Cockburn

Nasrallah Family to Visit Olympia
by Jennifer Zahn Spieler

8

"Opting Out"
by Molly Gibbs

Torture's Dirty Secret: It Works
by Naomi Klein

9

Know All You Can Know
by Molly Gibbs

10

Buy Your Gas at Citgo
by Jeff Cohen

Venezuelan President Wants Americans to "Liberate"
by Andrea Rodriguez

New Strategy Needed
by Emily Lardner

11

Disarmament Actions in NYC
By Holly GG

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